1: Leitner L-3 (1866-93) 1893? AV3 Dard AV3



## D. MARRIAGE.

584 In Gilgit it appears to be a more simple ceremony than in Chilâs and Astór. The father of the boy goes to the father of the girl and presents him with a knife about 1½ feet long, 4 yards of cloth and a pumpkin filled with wine. If
585 the father accepts the present the betrothal is arranged. It is generally the fashion that after the betrothal, which is named: "*Shéir qatar wíye, ballí píye*, = 4 yards of cloth and a knife he has given, the pumpkin he has drunk," the marriage takes place. A betrothal is inviolable, and is only dissolved by death so far as the woman is concerned. The young man is at liberty to dissolve the contract. When the marriage day arrives the men and women who are acquainted with the parties range themselves in rows at the house of the bride, the bridegroom with her at his left sitting together at the end of the row. The Mulla then reads the prayers, the ceremony is completed and the playing, dancing and drinking begin. [583] It is considered the proper thing for the bridegroom's father, if he belongs to the true Shín race, to pay 12 tolas of gold of the value [at Gilgit] of 15 Rupees Nanakshahi (10 annas each) to the bride's father, who, however, generally, returns it with the bride, in kind—dresses, ornaments, &c., &c. The 12 tolas are not always, or even generally, taken in gold, but oftener in kind—clothes, provisions and ornaments. At Astór the ceremony seems to be a little more complicated. There the arrangements are managed by third parties; an agent being appointed on either side. The father of the young man sends a present of a needle and three real (red) "múngs" called "lújum" in Chilâsi, which, if accepted, establishes the betrothal of the parties. Then the father of the bride demands *pro formâ* 12 tolas [which in Astór and Chilâs are worth 24 Rupees of the value of ten annas each.]

All real "Shín" people must pay this dowry for their wives in money, provisions or in the clothes which the bride's father may require. The marriage takes place when

1: Leitner L-3 (1866-93) 1893? AV3 Dard AV3



relatives of the girl if they discover the intrigue revenge the insult by murdering the paramour, who, however, does not lose caste by the alliance.

The bridegroom dances as well as his twelve companions. The girl ought not to be older than 15 years; but at 12 girls are generally engaged.*

The Balti custom of having merely a *claim to dowry* on the part of the woman—the prosecution of which claim so often depends on her satisfaction with her husband or the rapacity of her relatives—is in spite of the intercourse of the Baltis with the Shin people never observed by the latter; not even by the Shin colonists of little Tibet who are called "Brokhpá."

When the bridegroom has to go for his bride to a distant village he is furnished with a bow. On arriving at his native place he crosses the breast of his bride with an arrow and then shoots it off. He generally shoots three arrows off in the direction of his home.

At Astór the custom is sometimes to fire guns as a sign of rejoicing. This is not done at Gilgit.

When the bridegroom fetches his bride on the second day to his own home, the girl is crying with the women of her household and the young man catches hold of her dress in front (at Gilgit by the hand) and leads her to the door. If the girl cannot get over embracing her people and crying with them quickly, the twelve men who have come along with the bridegroom (who in Astóri are called "hilalée" = bridegrooms and "garóni" in Gilgiti) sing the following song :—

INVITATION TO THE BRIDE.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| *Nikàstalì* | *quáray kusúni* | ("*astali*" *is added to* |
| Come out | hawk's daughter. | *the fem. Imp*). |
| *Nikastali* | *ke karantlìè* | ("*balantle*," in Gilgiti). |
| Come out | why delayest thou! | |
| *Nikastali* | *máleyn* | *gutljo.* |
| Come out | (from) thy father's | tent. |

* The Turks say "a girl of 15 years of age should be either married or buried.